



The Rhode Island Rivers Council
c/o RI Water Resources Board
235 Promenade Street, Suite 394
Providence, RI 02908
www.ririvers.org



Minutes of April 13, 2011, Meeting
RI Department of Administration
William Powers Building
One Capitol Hill
Conference Room B
Providence, RI 02908

ATTENDANCE:

A. Members Present

Guy Lefebvre (Chair)
Ted Callender (Vice Chair)
Emily Cousineau
Paul Gonsalves
Lisa McGreavy
Jane Sherman
Charlie Vandemoer

B. Members Absent

Claudia Staniszewski (Sec/Tres)
Mike Walker

C. Guests in Attendance

Judy Hadley – Blackstone River Watershed Council and Friends of the Blackstone
Ann Morrill – Kickemuit River Council

1. Call to Order

Mr. Lefebvre called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm. Ms. Sherman noted there was a quorum.

2. Review and approval of November 10, 2010 meeting minutes

Ms. Sherman moved to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Callender seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. Grants Program

Salt Ponds Coalition (SPC) grant amendment request.

In a written document to the council, Secretary/Treasurer Staniszewski reported that the SPC current project grant was:

Monitor dissolved nitrogen and phosphorus concentrations in Quonnie Pond (4 x in summer) and Green Hill Pond (1 sample) through sediment core analysis using a core incubation chamber. Purpose is to investigate if internal recycling within the ponds produces the main source of ammonia, rather than external sources; and

SPC requested the following change:

Seek permission to utilize RC grant to fund six un-funded sampling stations and part of a seventh on Ninigret, Green Hill and Point Judith Ponds (what RC funds were used for last year). Many of SPC's stations are funded by private donors, or associations, towns and businesses, but these stations are not. The change request would allow SPC to maintain all of the stations and continue to build the historic record. Since last year, all of SPC's sampling results have been posted on its website and they will continue to add to the database.

Ms. Sherman made a motion to approve the grant amendment. Mr. Vandermoer seconded the motion. The motion was approved. Mr. Callender recused himself. Ms. McGreavy abstained.

Kickemuit River Council (KRC) grant amendment request.

In a written document to the council, Secretary/Treasurer Staniszewski reported that the KRC current project grant was:

Analysis of the data already collected from sewer line cameraing to provide the Town of Warren justification for lining the leaking sewer line; and

KRC requested the following change:

To apply the \$1,961 to a construction cost analysis for repair to the same sewer line the purpose of which is to determine the cost to the Town for repairs. KRC is committed to working with the Town to raise the funds to repair the line. A meeting on the analysis of the sewer line data was recently held.

Mr. Callender made a motion to approve the grant amendment request subject to other necessary funds for the construction cost analysis being identified by June 30, 2011.

Ms. Sherman seconded the motion. The motion was approved. Ms. McGreavy and Mr. Vandermoer abstained.

4. Designation Process

Mr. Lefebvre said that notices for redesignation went out in March by email to the Kickemuit River Council, Friends of the Moshassuck, Pawtuxet River Authority and Watershed Council, and the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council. Application materials are due back June 3, 2011 with a public hearing and vote to be held in September or October. Mr. Lefebvre also mentioned that a meeting will be scheduled this spring or summer at the URI Narragansett Bay Campus to address designations for the Hunt, SW Coastal Narragansett, and Saugatucket watersheds. Parties from the Hunt River Watershed Association, Friends of the Hunt River Watershed, the Narrow River Preservation Association, and the Salt Ponds Coalition will be invited to participate. Walter Galloway and Sharon Pavignano said they would participate.

5. Educational Display and Materials

Ms. McGreavy showed the new three panel blue display board equipped with an optional light. The center panel also has an additional small panel that mounts on top of the central panel to display the organization's name. Ms. McGreavy also prepared materials for the display. The center panel has a laminated state watersheds map prepared by Paul Jordan of DEM. The two side panels each have four 8.5x11inch display that include the name, logo, and photos from the designated watershed councils' websites. Display copies of watershed DEM studies and reports have also been prepared with take away cards describing a study and providing it's precise website address. Ms. McGreavy also prepared a fold in three RIRC brochure/flyer that describes RIRC and has the names, logos and website addresses listed attractively in the center inside panel. Council members suggested several minor revisions and agreed the flyer/brochure was ready to be printed. Ms. McGreavy also prepared a revised two sided placemat for children with a watersheds theme. Council members thought this piece should have more revisions and review prior to printing. The council heartily thanked Ms. McGreavy for all her fine efforts in bringing together the elements of a substantive and attractive RIRC display with accompanying materials. During the discussion of the brochure, Mr. Callender mentioned it would be good to renew the stewardship program in some form. Mr. Lefebvre said he thought

the program included more material than was practical for this type of adult education effort. He suggested that the council might consult with Denise Poyer of the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association about how another version of the watershed stewardship might be assembled and integrated.

6. River Related Events Calendar

The council has registered to be a participant in the *Roger Williams Park Zoo Earth Day Party for the Planet* exhibit on Sunday, April 17, 2011, from 11am to 3pm. Ms. McGreavy and Mr. Lefebvre agreed to cover the hours with other council members being welcome to join them at the zoo at will without commitment to time slots. The council has also agreed to cosponsor with the Town of Narragansett's Parks and Recreation Department the *Ninth Annual Environmental Awareness Day at Narragansett Beach* on Saturday, July 16, 2011, from 10am to 1pm. A copy of an invitational email to watershed councils and friends of the Rivers Council was distributed to council members. Additionally, it was noted Ms. Denise Poyer of the Wood Pawcatuck Watershed Association is collecting information about summer paddles in Rhode Island to publish a list paddle events.

7. River Restoration Group of RI Habitat Restoration Team

Mr. Lefebvre reported he attended on behalf of the council the second meeting of the River Restoration Group of the RI Habitat Restoration Team held earlier in the afternoon at DEM with about forty people in attendance. The meeting featured a slide presentation by Brian Graber, of American Rivers, a nonprofit Washington DC based organization that provides grants for dam removal projects. Mr. Graber said there are about 13,120 dams in the five states of CT, MA, NH, RI and VT. He said nationally dam removals have numbered in the past three years as follows: 8 in 2008; 12 in 2009 and 14 in 2010. He said PA has the most favorable dam removal state regulations that include a restoration waiver process. Regarding dam removal processes in other states, NH has a special permit attachment; MA has a guidance manual and VT provides scientific assistance from regulators. Mr. Graber advocated the use of flowcharts by state regulators. If there is federal financing for a dam removal project, a lead agency must be identified. If there is not federal funding, the Army Corps of Engineers is considered the lead federal agency for a project unless otherwise determined. Mr. Lefebvre said he asked if starting with dams closest to the mouth of a river/stream and working upstream was preferred. Mr. Graber responded that dam removals are culturally opportunistic and mid stream dam removals are advocated. For one river with multiple dam removals planned, he said the removals are being sequenced with the uppermost dam being removed first and sequencing that proceeds downstream. The council discussed these findings and agreed that RIRC should address the merits of possible dam removals on a case-by-case basis without a general policy at this time.

8. Membership and Appointments

Mr. Lefebvre provided council members with copies of a letter he sent to Governor Chafee dated April 8, 2011, requesting that the governor make appointments and reappointments to the council. Mr. Lefebvre noted that the letter also supports the nomination of Walter Galloway to the Rivers Council. Mr. Lefebvre said that he felt it was principally the responsibility of the governor and his staff to assemble the nine appointments to the council. The council could make recommendations and assist the governor, but the council does not have this principal responsibility. It was agreed, however, that the council should continue to consider making recommendations of additional members to the governor. Mr. Vandemoer mentioned the possibility of changing the required number of voting members for a quorum. It was noted that six for a quorum is included in the enabling legislation making a change difficult to ascertain.

9. Officer and Committee Reports

Mr. Lefebvre provided the council with a summary of the winter activities from November 2010 to April 2011 by the council and council members agreed the report should be included in the minutes of the meeting. The reports was as follows:

Grants Program – In accordance with the Rivers Council October 2010 vote, Claudia Staniszewski prepared grant contracts for five projects by six watershed councils and Emily Cousineau processed the grants through the state treasurer's office. The total Fiscal Year 2011 amount, including Rivers Council administrative funding, was \$22,444. Checks were issued by the state treasurer in February, 2011.

Designations – Further dialogue took place about overlapping jurisdictional issues regarding designations. Walter Galloway of USEPA provided guidance to the council. A decision was made to go forward with re-designations of four watershed councils and have further dialogue for new designations about overlapping jurisdictional issues as well as current non-designated areas.

Educational Exhibits and Materials – Lisa McGreavy has led efforts resulting in the acquisition of a new educational exhibit. Lisa has also prepared materials for the exhibit as well as drafted a new flyer/brochure for the Rivers Council highlighting designated watershed councils. She has also prepared a revised two-sided educational watershed placemat for school age children. Arrangements have been made for the Rivers Council to participate in the Roger Williams Park Zoo Earth Day Party for the Planet on Sunday, April 17th and for the Rivers Council to cosponsor with the Town of Narragansett the Ninth Annual Environmental Awareness Day at Narragansett Beach on Saturday, July 16th.

Website – Guy Lefebvre has revised all pages of the website and added one page for news and notes. Rivers Council administrative documents have been formatted to pdf documents and linked to the website. Revisions to the website have been used for copy for the new draft Rivers Council brochure. Additionally, two email accounts have been established: info@ririvers.org and irc@ririvers.org.

Recommendation Letter – Ginny Leslie of Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, Inc. provided guidance to the council about National Park Service developments in regard to the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. Guy Lefebvre wrote a letter dated February 7, 2011, to Senator Reed, Senator Whitehouse and Representative Cicilline supporting the transition of the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor to become part of the National Park System. Copies of these letters are linked to the website.

Mr. Lefebvre provided council members with copies of a letter dated March 7, 2011, from US Senator Sheldon Whitehouse in response to the council's letter of February 7, 2011, regarding national park status for certain areas of the Blackstone River Valley. Senator Whitehouse said: "I appreciate hearing from you, and I agree that important mill sites throughout the valley deserve national park status to preserve these important national treasures for the benefit of current and future generations." Further, Senator Whitehouse said: "You can be sure that I will continue to work with NPS representatives to ensure the most expansive vision for a national park in Rhode Island is achieved."

Ms. McGreavy provided council members with information from Greg Cassidy of DEM about three river related recreational trail grants awarded in 2010 as follows:

Central Falls: Central Falls Landing. This project will create a riverside trail along the banks of the Blackstone River to compliment the existing Central Falls Landing Recreation Facility. Planned improvements include a picnic area, river overlooks, and an extension of the existing boat dock as well as bank stabilization measures.

Warren: Blue-Green Trail. The main purpose of this project is to create a formal recreational area and trailhead at The Meadows (town-owned land) so that residents and visitors can explore the scenic Kickemuit River from both the land and the water. The Green Trail (the Warren Bike Path) extension is 2.2 miles from Long Lane to the East Bay Bike Path. The Green Trail improvements are located on four of the 18 acres of town owned land. Surrounding the four acres of upland is a variety of wetlands, which will remain undisturbed. The Kickemuit River Blue Trail will skirt

about 5.75 miles of shoreline in Warren. The proposed trail incorporates eight of the town's CRMC approved Right of Ways as additional launch sites.

Warwick: East Natick Village Trail. This project is the first phase of a riverwalk planned for the banks of the Pawtuxet River. This segment involves the construction of 1700 linear feet of riverside trail and the installation of a canoe/kayak launch. The primary segment of the trail (750 linear feet) will be constructed at grade using low impact surface materials such as stone dust, gravel or wood chips. This section of the trail will be ADA compliant for wheelchair access to a scenic river overlook which will be the main access to the canoe/kayak launch. The project will also include a small parking lot near the launch. The remainder of the riverwalk (950 linear feet) will be a seasonal trail with natural surface. This portion of the trail is subject to seasonal flooding and will be maintained through selective cutting and pruning.

Ms. McGreavy also provided council members with information from Scott Millar of DEM about the recently completed *RI Low Impact Development (LID) Site Planning and Design Guidance Manual, March 2011*. The LID manual is a companion piece to the recently completed revised state stormwater manual. The LID manual contains over 45 site planning and design techniques for communities to include in their land use regulations. The link to the manual is:

<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bpolaadm/suswshed/pdfs/lidplan.pdf>

Emily Cousineau noted a room scheduling change would be necessary for the next meeting in which the council will need to meet in Conference Room C rather than Conference Room B.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:50pm by unanimous consent.